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ABSTRACT

The first teacher in-service development program in foreign language content instruction was run by the Continuing Education Centre of the University of Jyvaskyla in 1991-1992 as a contract program for the City of Kokkola. The success of that program led to the development of the present Teaching Content in a Foreign Language (TCFL) Program, which offers the opportunity to specialize in the teaching of non-language subjects through English or German. The aim of the program is to provide the teacher and the institute in which he operates an opportunity to develop his expertise to teach in either English or German to an optimum level. Before initiating a TCFL program, various issues to be considered include clarification of aims, cooperation and collaboration, methodological approaches, teaching materials, assessment of results, follow-up, sharing of information, and public relations. The range of subjects covered in the current program include general and vocational subjects. The program comprises six modules of contact study, spread out across 12 months. The design of the program follows general principles of TCFL. The general framework and module descriptions are discussed. Participant feedback on all programs has been extremely positive. (CK)

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Framework and Implementation of the Jyvaskyla TCE/TCFL Programmes

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FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JYVÄSKYLÄ TCE/TCFL PROGRAMMES

History and Background

The first teacher in-service development programme in foreign language content instruction was run by the Continuing Education Centre of the University of Jyväskylä in 1991-1992 as a contract programme for the City of Kokkola. This provided the basis for the development of the national programme, which was started in April 1992 in Jyväskylä. The programme was called the *TCE Teacher Development Programme (Teaching Content through English)*, and it ended in April 1993. The number of participants was 60, representing all levels of education (except university), from primary level through to vocational.

The success of the 1992-1993 programme led to the development in 1992 of the present *TCFL (Teaching Content in a Foreign Language) Programme*, which offers the opportunity to specialize in the teaching of non-language subjects through *English or German*. The 1993-1994 programme, which is to end in April 1994, also has participants (total 95) from all levels, from throughout Finland. The third national programme is to be held in 1994-1995.

As the interest in and demand for this type of teacher development has grown, institutions (mainly polytechnics) throughout the country have been requesting on-site, institution-specific and tailored training programmes. By the end of 1993, six polytechnics have already embarked on such programmes, and there are indications that the number will steadily rise. In addition, some subject-specific areas have been found to be significantly appropriate at this point for instruction through a foreign language, such as environmental education, and other courses which deal with international issues or aim at enhancing international understanding.

General Aims

The general aim of the programme is to provide the individual teacher, and school/college in which s/he operates, an opportunity to develop his/her expertise, skills and abilities to teach in either English or German to an optimum level.

By the end of the programme, participants should be able to:

- Possess a clear understanding of the theoretical foundations of TCFL
- Understand the major differences between teaching the foreign language as a subject and teaching non-language subjects through this language
- Recognize individual strengths and weaknesses in using English/German as a means of communication
- Have access to the latest research findings on TCFL within Finland and elsewhere
- Implement a clearly defined course/curriculum plan
- Practice different types of teaching methodologies to enhance learning in the content classroom
- Identify suitable teaching materials available
- Design assessment procedures for TCFL classes
- Appreciate the role that TCFL may play within school/college development
- Carry out classroom research for self-development purposes
- Possess a final draft of a personal action research report on some aspects TCFL
- Formulate clear action plans for the implementation of future TCFL courses/curricula.

Key issues in adopting a TCFL approach

If an individual teacher or an institution is planning to start the teaching of non-language subject(s) through a foreign language, certain issues need to be considered prior to any larger-scale operation. These issues, which are prerequisites for successful implementation, also require on-going appraisal and evaluation when conducting TCFL courses.

1. Clarification of TCFL aims

The first question concerns the reasons for starting this type of teaching. Why are we interested in this approach? What are we aiming to achieve? Do we have the time and resources available? Is this in the best interest of the learners? Do we understand the potential hazards and the implications? What proportion of the course or the curriculum should be taught through the foreign language?

Clarification of aims is extremely important, because it forms the framework around which all ensuing questions hinge. For instance, if the main aim is to provide opportunities for foreign language development in some specific skills (eg. oral skills), then the teaching methods and materials must allow and support these. Simultaneously, however, the amount of subject matter content to be handled might have to be condensed from what it usually is in first language instruction. It should not be assumed that this means reduction in the overall quality of a course, but rather the adoption of a new approach, which fulfills a dual objective. Therefore, two sets of aims run parallel, and it is essential to ensure that neither is neglected and that both are realistic.

2. Co-operation and collaboration

Any new venture requires a certain degree of co-operation. TCFL requires a considerable amount of it, often in very new forms. The key participants in this co-operation are the principal, who is responsible for the administrative framework within which TCFL takes place, the non-language subject matter teacher and the language teacher responsible for a given group, and the learner. In addition, depending on the educational level, the key participants may also include other interest groups, such as parents, educational authorities, fellow teachers, and even the community at large. Questions to be asked here address all these issues, including the fundamental questions of whether the basic prerequisites for such co-operation and collaboration exist already, or whether the introduction of TCFL will actually also have to act as a catalyst for constructive change. If this is the case, then the role of the principal and the ways in which TCFL is introduced become all the more significant. And in practical terms, there must be additional time reserved for planning and information sharing, as well as for monitoring the opinions of all interest groups.

3. *Methodological approaches*

Starting TCFL with specific language development aims in mind often involves reappraisal of teaching methods generally in use. Apart from the fact that certain subjects tend to favour certain types of teaching approaches, TCFL will, in most cases, necessitate a shift towards more learner-interactive approaches. After all, in our context, one of the most common aims for the introduction of TCFL is to develop foreign language productive skills. The questions to be asked, then, are whether my approach allows for the development of those skills that have been named as the language aims of my course, and to what extent should I assess and modify the methods I usually use, in order to make them more relevant for both content and language development.

4. *Teaching materials*

In the early stages of introducing TCFL, a considerable amount of time and attention should be given to materials development and acquisition. As yet, ready-made, commercial materials for TCFL do not generally exist, and the materials aimed at the native speakers of the foreign language are often inappropriate for wide-spread introduction into the Finnish classroom. These are, however, quite useful as resource material to be adapted and further developed. If the financial resources for the acquisition of such materials are scarce, even more time must be set aside for materials design and development, because direct translation of previously used Finnish materials will probably not work in the new context.

A further consideration here is the coordination of the subject matter content and the concurrently presented language teaching content. Lack of co-operation here might lead to a situation in which the teachers are not working in the best interests of the learner. Ideally, the non-language subject classroom should reinforce, consolidate, and even expand, the kinds of skills that have been or are being focused upon in the language classroom. This interdisciplinary approach, however, does require joint planning and implementation, as well as assessment, and consumes surprisingly much time.

5. *Assessment of results*

Yet another of the key points to be discussed and decided upon in a TCFL context is the question of assessment. Which aspects of content

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command and language development should be assessed, in what way and in which language? Who is responsible for test design, and in what way is overall learner progress monitored? It is the context of assessment that will show most clearly whether the aims set at the beginning are sufficiently specific, motivating but realistic, and acceptable to all parties involved.

In addition to learner assessment, it is important to also have tools for the evaluation of the TCFL implementation itself. The data collected through, for instance, action research procedures by the teachers themselves will provide necessary feedback on their work, as well as serve as evidence for various interest groups and stakeholders, or as a basis for the decisions taken within the programme. Student portfolios and other continuous assessment devices, on the other hand, provide information on the learning process and progress and develop tools for learning how to learn.

6. Follow-up, information sharing and public relations

Since adopting a new teaching approach necessarily sparks interest at least in the institutional community, it is often necessary to make plans about who should be informed about it, in what way, how often, and who is responsible for giving this information. Open discussion with at least colleagues and learners seems to be essential for positive outcomes and support, and in some cases parental support, as well as involvement of educational and other authorities will also become necessary. What is important is that for any larger-scale TCFL a clear and systematic plan is thought out on the follow-up and reporting procedures to be used during the programme. Decisions about these issues should be made relatively early, in order to be prepared to answer questions, to gather data and to provide appropriate evidence for all interest groups. In this way it is also possible to systematically follow the progress of the programme, and to make the necessary adjustments in any phase or aspect of the programme implementation.

General framework of the Jyväskylä TCFL teacher development programme

The Jyväskylä teacher in-service development programme comprises six modules of contact study, spread out across 12 months, with self-study,

experimentation and action research periods in between. The design of the programme follows the general principles of TCFL, with aims set for both content (ie. theory of TCFL) and language development of the participant group. Thus, the programme is run in English (and German) and all the assignments, including the final action research report, are also done in the foreign language. In this way it is possible to demonstrate the variety of methodological approaches possible in TCFL, and to monitor progress. The participants write their individual plans and design their own projects, but during the contact days they can collaborate with colleagues, share concerns, brainstorm for new ideas, and benefit from collegial assessment and support.

Each TCFL programme has been slightly different because of the different needs of the participant groups, but the basic framework has remained as follows:

GENERAL FRAMEWORK AND MODULE DESCRIPTIONS (example from 1993-1994)
(to be adjusted according to the needs of the participant groups)

February	**Enrolment, background surveys & preassessment**
May	**Orientation seminar & FL Communication skills assessment**
(Summer	intensive FL courses, if needed)
Module 1 **August**	**Language immersion & FL content instruction: theoretical principles, aims & experiences**
Aims	* to give an overview of the state of the art in TCFL and bilingual programmes * language aims: diagnostic survey of the participants' levels of communicative proficiency and of their needs
Module 2 **September**	**Teaching content through the FL vs. teaching the FL as a subject**
Aims	* to reflect upon the differences between TCFL and formal language teaching, on the basis of a) principles of language learning and teaching; b) second language development, aims and objectives; and c)

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individual learning contracts, learning styles and strategies
* language aims: activation of communication skills, diagnosis of pronunciation and presentation skills, learner profiles for individual learning aims and plans

Module 3
October
Aims

Subject-specific concepts and course planning

* to make individual decisions on future TCFL content areas; survey of key concepts, terminology and vocabulary in each subject
* to introduce frameworks for course and material designs on the basis of different methodological, curricular and other criteria
* language aim: vocabulary building

Module 4
November

Facilitating FL development in the content classroom

Aims

* to provide practice in using different kinds of teaching methods for language development
* to design individual course frameworks, determine aims and forms of assessment
* language aims: practicing language functions used in the teaching context

Module 5
January

Individual course design and classroom research

Aims

* to discuss effects and concerns of experimentation in the institutional context
* to finalize individual plans for experimentation
* to develop tools for classroom research and evaluation
* language aims: practicing classroom managemen and teaching

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Experimentation and classroom action research period

Module 6	**Follow-up reports, research results and evaluation**
April	
Aims	* to share experiences, to report orally on experimentations * to make follow-up plans (eg. editing of materials) * to plan reports to interest groups * language aims: diagnostic TCFL language assessment
May	**Deadline for submission of written research reports and sample materials**
(Summer	courses in Britain, via the National Board of Education)

N.B. The modules follow an integrated, process-type approach and the order of contents may vary according to the participant needs. Active individual involvement is required for sufficient tailoring of modules. The extent of the whole programme, including research reports and other assignment work is 15-20 university credits, depending on the extent of experimentation. A certificate of completion, as well as an optional TCFL language diploma, is given to participants who have fulfilled all programme requirements.

Research and written assignments connected with the programme

Due to the nature of the programme, research activities are required from both programme administrators and participants.

1. *Programme administrators and trainers*

* background surveys of participants (for programme tailoring), including participants' educational background and professional experience, formal FL studies, international experience, prior TCFL experience, attitudes and concept of language, language use and language learning, self-assessment of own language use and skills, self-assessment of

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predicted TCFL skills, reasons for starting, specific wishes regarding programme
* orientation questionnaire (to survey views of TCFL, personal aims, institutional aims, main concerns, and to enhance awareness of needs)
* proficiency tests (for assessment and consultation purposes) administered at the beginning and end of programme
* survey of individual learning styles and language learning strategies
* continuous follow-up of and consultation on individual action research projects
* assessment of action research reports

2. *Participants (in addition to the above)*

* self-study and written assignments for each module
* development and continuous assessment of personal plans (in the form of diaries, logbooks or portfolios, SWOT analysis)
* development of individual course plans
* development and experimentation with 1-2 lessons, reporting
* development of action research plan
* extensive action research period with special emphasis on methodology, materials development, research questionnaires and assessment reported orally and in the written form (final report)

Range of subjects covered in experimentations (1993)

1) **general education**: integrated curriculum (FL across the curriculum environmental studies, civics, natural sciences, mathematics, history religion, arts and craft, music, P.E., FL cultural and social skills

2) **vocational education**: marketing, accounting, ADP, business economic commodity studies, risk management, forestry, restaurant service an catering, forest economy, sociology, psychology, counselling, creativ expression, physiotherapy, anatomy, nursing, plant husbandry, personn management, history of wine-making.

Participant feedback

Participant feedback on all TCE/TCFL programmes has been extremely positive. What seems to be of utmost importance is the fact that the programme offers an opportunity for practicing teachers to co-operate across curricular and institutional borders. At this time of profound change in educational priorities, values and directions, the participating teachers seem to find the support available from their peers extremely important, both for their work in general and for their TCFL experiments in particular.

Tailoring an in-service programme to the degree that is necessary in our particular context is difficult and demanding. On one hand, the content must address the fundamental issues involved in teaching content and language simultaneously, and, on the other hand, the participant group represent very heterogeneous needs and skills. Crossing well-established subject boundaries is a sensitive and delicate matter even in training, let alone at the school/college into which the participants return with their enthusiastic plans. The clarification of teacher roles, in order to provide a basis for peaceful and constructive co-existence and co-operation is not an easy task, but requires constant attention. For these reasons alone, the TCFL Network (described below), and the support it can offer in terms of reuniting programme participants and others working in the same field, as well as in other ways, is a necessary forum for sharing new research information, experiences, concerns and many other issues of practical importance.